

## Horses & Heroes™ in Shawnee, Kansas is Verified by Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries



December 1, 2022 (Shawnee, KS) – The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS), the only globally recognized organization providing standards for identifying legitimate animal sanctuaries, awarded Verified status to Horses & Heroes on November 16, 2022.

Verification means that Horses & Heroes meets the criteria of a true equine sanctuary/rescue and is providing humane and responsible care of the animals. To be awarded Verified status, an organization must meet GFAS's rigorous and peer-reviewed animal care standards which are confirmed by a site visit, and they

must also adhere to a demanding set of ethical and operational principles. The Verification status also provides a clear and trusted means for the public, donors, and grantors to recognize Horses & Heroes as an exceptional organization.

“We are proud to announce the recent Verification of Horses & Heroes,” said Daryl Tropea, Ph.D., GFAS Program Director-Equine. “Horses & Heroes’ herd of amazing equines helps people suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Many of these equines have their own traumatic histories. The wellbeing of each equine during therapy is given the highest priority. Equines are not ridden but participate in ground exercises with people. In addition to providing excellent care, this organization is committed to management best practices ensuring organizational growth and sustainability.”

“GFAS is an important accountability partner for H&H,” said Julie Baker, Founder and Executive Director of Horses & Heroes Inc. “The required accreditation SOP's have pushed H&H into a higher level of accountability and being prepared. The site visit, although not like a "white-glove" inspection of the Marine Corps barracks, was thorough and required intentional planning of safety measures, signage, and OSHA documentation.”

Baker continued, “The team of therapy horses at H&H have either been rescued from the slaughter pipeline or they were discarded by previous owners because of a physical injury or limitation(s). Several horses that have come to us have been starved, emotionally or physically abused, abandoned, or neglected. The path to healing for these horses required emotional and physical safety, time, and mutual respect. This healing process is vital and similar to the healing process for our human clients. Interestingly, clients connect with a horse that has a similar history, although we do not share the stories of the horses upfront; it is really beautiful to witness the mutual connection and healing of both horse and human. GFAS ensures we provide safe, consistent, and intentional husbandry and business practices and we are honored to be one of their newly accredited organizations.”

The GFAS Equine Accreditation Program is made possible by a generous grant from The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals® and the Kenneth Scott Charitable Trust.

### **About Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries**

Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization dedicated to the sole purpose of strengthening and supporting the work of animal sanctuaries, rescues, and rehabilitation centers worldwide. The goal of GFAS in working with and assisting these animal care facilities is to ensure they are supported, honored,



recognized, and rewarded for meeting important criteria in providing care to the animals in residence. GFAS was founded in 2007, by animal protection leaders from a number of different organizations in response to virtually unchecked and often hidden exploitation of animals for human entertainment and financial profit. The GFAS Board of Directors guides the organization's work in a collaborative manner. While the board includes those in top leadership at The Humane Society of the United States, International Fund for Animal Welfare, and American Anti-Vivisection Society, all board members serve as individuals dedicated to animal sanctuaries. [www.sanctuaryfederation.org](http://www.sanctuaryfederation.org).

### **About Horses & Heroes™**

H&H is Kansas City's premier equine-assisted mental and alternative health therapy program for the military, first responders and their families. Founded in 2015, H&H is one of more than 600 certified Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association programs (EAGALA) globally. H&H decided to become certified through EAGALA because of their long track record of being the gold-standard for EAP modalities governed by a code of ethics.

The founding principles of H&H are **Integrity, Trust** and **Healing**. Each of these principles, when connected, provides the vital environment necessary for those affected by significant and life-altering trauma. H&H strives to connect with organizations that also support principles of code of ethics, transparency, accountability and preparedness.

For more information, please visit <https://www.horsesandheroes.org/>